as the tidal effect is felt."[37] The mangrove-nipa area between the Siaton and Canaway Rivers is the source of most of the nipa used to thatch houses in this vicinity. 137 [314]

Soils

Two parent materials have played major roles in the origin and development of present day Negros' soils. First, the volcanic parent materials from the central mountains and, second, the limestone materials derived from coral depositions during periods of Negros' submergence. There are three major soil groups in Negros, based on factors of relief and the nature of the parent materials.[38] 134

The three major soil groups of Negros are (1) flat lowland soils; (2) rolling uplands soils (subdivided into those of sedimentary and igneous derivation); and (3) hill and mountain soils. The most important agricultural soil group is the flat lowland soils. These are soils of recent alluvial deposition which are usually found on the level or slightly undulating lands of the coastal plains--the plains of western Negros, San Carlos, Bais, and the many small plains of the eastern and western coasts. The flat lowland soils are the best agricultural soils in Negros, covering about one-fifth of the island, and are

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[37] Wernstedt, op. cit., p.47.

[38] The soils of Negros are inadequately studied. The two major studies are M. M. Alicante and others, op. cit., and Alfredo Barrera and others, "Soil Survey of Negros Oriental Province, Philippines." Manila, Bureau of Soil Conservation, 1950. Typescript.

GUHANG

Of all the "cash crops" of Caticugan guhang is probably the major source of cash income for the largest number of families. The fermented sap of the buri palm (Corypha elata Roxb.) is the source of guhang. Though much as been written about making tuba (from the sap of the coconut tree) there are fewer accounts of making guhang. One poblacion wit said the name of the drink came from the desire, after excessive drinking, "to go hang yourself." Brown states:

> This [the buri] is the largest and most stately palm found in the Philippines. Its straight trunk attains a diameter of one meter and height of 20 meters...The plant grows 25 to 30 or more years, during which time large quantities of starch collect in the trunk. It then flowers once and dies...[54]

Besides being the source of guhang the buri has many other uses in the Philippines. The palm is the source of alcohol, vinegar and sugar, all made from the sap while the trunk yields large quantities of starch. The edible kernels of the fruit are used to make sweetmeats. The immature unopened frond is utilized in many parts of the archipelago to manufacture mats, sails, bags, while the buri's petiole yields the so-called Buntal fiber from which the famous hats of Baliuag and Lucban are woven.[55] Barriofolk in Caticugan do not make sugar from the buri's sap, although flour was extracted from the

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[54] Brown, op. cit., I, p. 284.

[55] Brown, op. cit., I, pp. 286-95.

245
314

but practically no commercial activities are connected with the fiber. Before the last war a few people were said to gather kapok, either domestic or wild, and sell it to Chinese stores in the poblacion. Children would go to the forests to get pods from wild trees, to sell to Chinese for about five cents a pound. Today, however, no one in Caticugan sells kapok; the ground under most trees is littered with rotting pods. Many trees had died recently. Another reason the people said no one sold kapok was that most men dislike climbing the trees because the limbs break easily. Kapok is used by the barriofolk to stuff sleeping pillows. A device called lokogan is whirled between the palms of the hands in a basket of kapok to remove the seeds. (See Plate XXIX.) However, only one was seen in Caticugan.

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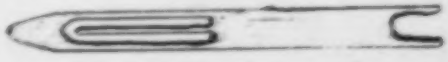
Plate XXIX



SIKHOHAN
Scale: 1" ~ 2½'

$275 in Ragay Gulf. These figures illustrate the inflation that has occurred in the Philippines since 1938.

Table XXXIV, at the end of this chapter, lists the local, English and scientific names (whenever possible) of fish caught in Siaton bonsods; Table XXXV gives the frequency of their catch and class accorded them by people living in both the barrio and Siaton poblacion.[1]

Construction of the Fish Corral

Construction of bonsods in Siaton begins in late October or early November. Bonsods are built, for the most part, between Malabuhan and Salag Point; few bonsods are erected west of Salag Point because the coral sea floor makes it almost impossible to embed the posts. (See Plates XLIV and XLV.) In the past the long bamboos needed to build a bonsod could be cut in Catiougan and other barrios near the sea. Today bamboo is cut in Lamtoc, Balanan, and Casala-an and floated as rafts down the river since nearby bamboo resources have been exhausted. Some fish corral owners advance to the cutters in the barrios part of the money to be paid for the bamboo with full payment made on delivery. Long thick poles usually cost about twenty cents each; in Tanjay similar bamboos are reported to bring twice this amount.

Most of the rattan obtained to build the bonsods comes from Tolong municipality. The people said that once rattan grew abundantly in the hills near Catiougan;

[1] [See pp. 640-645 -- Analyst]

[2] [See pp. 586A and B, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

438
314

today long trips must be made to more distant mountains to gather small supplies of rattan. Rattan cutting by Tolong barriofolk often results in conflicts between the rattan gatherers and individuals who have leased large tracts of forest for timber concessions.[56] Rattan

[56] To cut rattan legally a permit must be obtained from the Bureau of Forestry that states the number of pounds of rattan that may be cut in a designated area; the permit costs $2.50. Rattan licensees must also pay the municipality treasurer in which the rattan is cut a tax called gui-ya that amounts to about one cent a pound. An individual may be given permission to cut rattan in the same area where a timber concession has been granted.

Licensees frequently hired Bukidnons who live in the hills near Tolong to cut rattan in their concession. When these cutters are questioned by the employees of a lumbering concern to ascertain the legality of their activities, they give the name of the licensee who hired them. Sometimes Bukidnons cut rattan illegally and when discovered they give the name of an individual having a license to cut rattan but who has not hired them. The lumbering company may keep records of all licensed persons cutting rattan in their concession. The total rattan cut may be more than the permit allows if too many of these unauthorized cutters are included. The rattan licensee, too, may be purposely cutting more rattan than his permit grants. These irregularities may be reported to the local agent of the Bureau of Forestry in Tolong, who confronts the rattan licensee with violations of his permit that may be unknown to him. He may be fined or his permit cancelled. As a result, feuds develop between some rattan licensees and lumbering firms in southern Negros.

Rattan licensees who have been reported as illegally cutting excessive rattan may retaliate by reporting the presence of caingins in the area worked by the lumber concern; lumber concerns are legally required to prohibit caingins in the area they exploit. If caingins are reported, the firm may be fined or lose its license. Rattan licensees may also report illegal cutting or gathering of forest products not covered by timber concern's permit. As a result severe conflicts often occur between rattan cutters and timber concerns. This information was given me by Professor Oracion who knows the area intimately. Caticugan barriofolk cut rattan without a license but usually gather only small amounts for personal use.

335
[435]

Caticugan had cement forms to which wooden house posts were bolted by iron straps embedded in the concrete. The cost of cement, made in nearby Cebu Island, was so high in 1951-52 that few families could afford to buy several sacks when building a new house.

After the posts have been installed a temporary bracing (dalamba)--the same term used for fish corral bracing--is lashed to the posts on which barefoot workers stand while building the roof. Once the bracing is finished holes are bored in the upper portions of the posts to insert pegs (tarogos) that support the rafter beams. (See Plates LXV, 30, and LXV-A.)[1]

[342
435]

Rafter beams are normally lashed with rattan. The barriofolk tend to use nails or nuts and bolts to fix the various rafters when wood and not bamboo is used. Rattan, however, is still more popular and cheaper.[22]

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789
777

After the pegs are fixed in the posts, the sablayan (Plate LXV, 22) and balabag (Plate LXV, 28)[1] rafter beams are added and lashed in place with rattan. The "heads" or larger ends of the bamboo sablayan and balabag should

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314

[22] Barriofolk may gather their rattan (oway) in the mountains or buy it. Rattan gathered for house construction, is cut in lengths about 12 feet long. There are many names for different varieties of rattan, usually based upon their use. Mangnao, malabagakay, tagalola and malabutong rattan varieties are normally used in house construction. Tagalola is the rattan employed to lash the bamboo floor slats. Palasan and tagsa-on, thicker varieties, are used in making rope, e.g., to tie the goats or carabaos. Abangan, a thick variety, is not suitable for rope-making owing to the deep notches in the stem; it may be used as the anchor rope for bobo. Tagakan is rarely gathered because it is brittle "even when green" according to my informants. Homokan is used to make the woven seats of chairs or beds. Another variety of rattan, tagiti, the narrowest in diameter is used for a variety of purposes.

1 [See p. 682, cat. 335 or 116 -- Analyst]

high, with a capacity of about 2-1/4 pounds of clean rice; the largest was 9 inches high with a capacity of 4-1/2 pounds. It took her about two days to make the large pot; four or five of the smaller ones could be made in the same time--of course, after the clay had been gathered and prepared for working.

437 415 323

BURI WEAVING

285

Weaving of buri (Cebuano: buli) palm bags and sleeping mats is the most widespread of all handicrafts in the Siaton River valley. Large buri bags (baluyut), four or five feet high, serve to store rice or shelled corn. Smaller bags (bolugasan) are used to carry shelled corn to the poblacion mills for grinding for storage. Sleeping mats (banig) are about three to five feet in width and four to six feet in length. Plate LXX,[1] A and B, shows the type of weave used for making both the bags and sleeping mats. Drawing B (Plate LXX) shows how the edges of the sleeping mats are finished. Weaving buri bags and mats is strictly a woman's job, although men cut the fronds.

415 352 285 [462]

Preparing the Buri for Weaving

285 314

Unopened immature buri fronds are cut from the tree's crown. The best time to cut the fronds was said to be the period of the new moon; if gathered at any other time the fronds are very brittle and difficult to weave. After the unopened fronds are cut, they are pulled apart and placed, fan-like, on the ground to dry for two or three days.

1 [See p. 703, Cat. 285, or 116 -- Analyst]

285

When the fronds are dry the stiff mid-rib is stripped from each individual leaf. The leaves then are smoothed by running them over the back of a knife or seashell. Buri leaves are cut into fairly regular widths by use of a rattan guide (batacan). (See Plate LXXI.)[1] The batacan is hooked around a leaf and a small knife inserted just above the notch facing the worker; it penetrates the leaf to a second notch on the back of the batacan. By moving the batacan and the knife down the leaf together an even strip is cut. Buri strips, ready for weaving, are called lila.

After a sufficient supply of lilas is prepared, the plaiting of the bag or mat is begun. The only type of plaiting used is illustrated in Plate LXX. Strands used to plait mats and baskets are fairly broad and flat, producing a checkerboard type of design; actually little can be done in plaiting such strands except to pass them alternately over and under. Sleeping mats, unlike bags, are usually plaited with a double thickness. Only one woman in Caticugan made any attempt to decorate her buri bags. The sibokao tree's heartwood makes a brown dye; sometimes, though rarely, she used tanbark as a dye "because I do not have to buy the sibokao to make a dye." She dyed a few buri strips, plaiting them into the bag, making a simple geometric design. Plate LXX, C, illustrates the design made in some placemats she plaited for me.

285
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[386]

285
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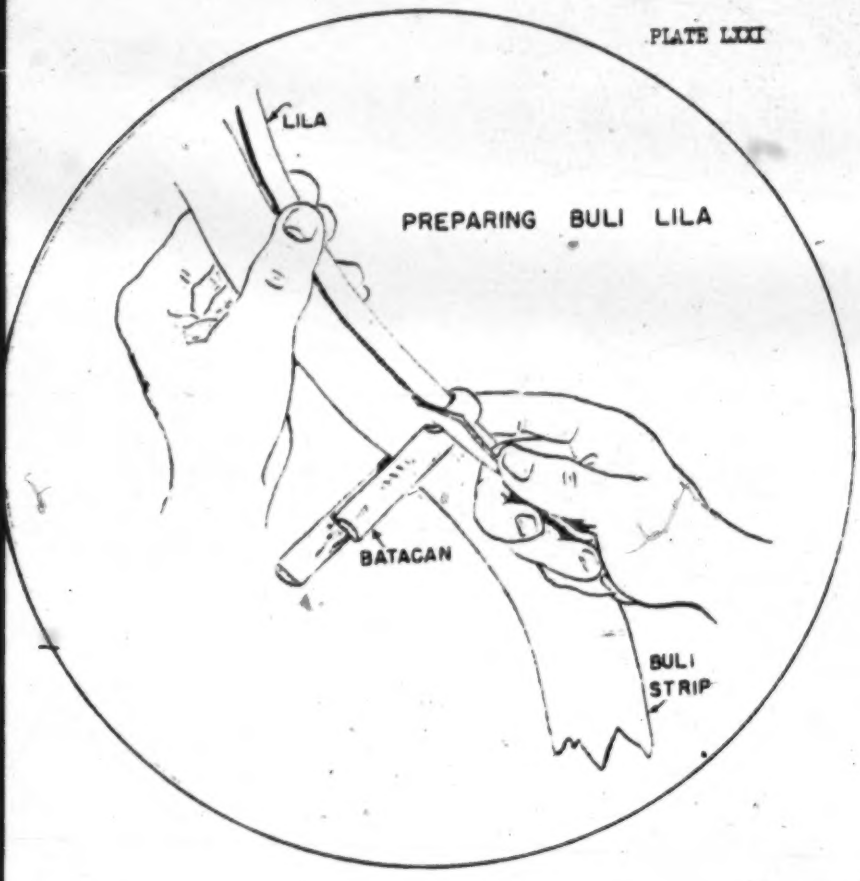
The decreasing number of buri palms in the vicinity of Caticugan may pose a problem for the barriofolk in the

1 [See p. 705, cat. 285 -- Analyst]

PLATE LXXI



285

not-too-distant future. Since the palm is usually killed to make suhang before it flowers, the reproductive cycle of the tree is disturbed. Most people agree that there were more buri palms a decade ago than today. If the palms become scarce the people will have a difficult time finding an adequate substitute for buri. However, this potential problem (I may exaggerate it) does not seem to worry the

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178

barriofolk. Possibly the developing jute industry of the Philippines will replace buri plaiting in the future.

BARRIO BASKETS

Three major types of baskets used by the barriofolk of Caticugan are: (1) the harvest basket, bukag; (2) the winnowing basket, niggo or ayagang; (3) and the shallow kalalay used in abaca weaving. Several other types of baskets were made by schoolchildren in the poblacion but never used in the barrio; they are taught to make small bags and baskets that can be sold as curios. Basket-making is said to be predominately a woman's job, although some men make bukags. Baskets were made so rarely in Caticugan that I never saw any of these three types being plaited.

The bukag, ~~previously~~ mentioned in connection with the corn harvests, is a loosely plaited basket of thin strips of bamboo and rattan about 2 feet in height with an 18-inch opening. The bukag is roughly made and does not take much time to plait. This type of basket, to my knowledge, is always made by the barriofolk; I never saw any for sale in either the poblacion or Dumaguete. They are used, almost entirely, to carry unhusked corn from the fields to the house or storehouse.

The wide shallow basket used for winnowing the chaff from pounded rice or ground corn is called the niggo or ayagang. This basket also is plaited from rattan and thin pieces of bamboo. An increasing number of them are